



ONYCHOGALEA UNGUIFER, Gould.

J. Gould and H. C. Richter, del et lith

Hullmandel & Walton, Imp

ONYCHOGALEA UNGUIFERA, *Gould.*

Nail-tailed Kangaroo.

HEAD, ARMS, AND TIP OF THE TAIL, IN TWO POSITIONS, OF THE SIZE OF NATURE.

A MORE singular Kangaroo than the present does not exist among the known species of this great family of animals, its whole contour being characterized by a degree of elegance seldom seen among the Mammalia; but its most peculiar feature is the well-developed but somewhat flat nail at the end of the tail. It is said that the Lion has this organ terminating in a spiny hook; and here we find an analogous feature among the Kangaroos. From the discovery of Australia to the present time (March 1863), the single specimen of this animal in the British Museum is the only one that has been sent to Europe. It will be seen by the accompanying illustration, that the appendage which renders this species so remarkable is covered and protected by a well-developed tuft of lengthened hairs. Reduced figures of the entire animal will be found on the succeeding Plate, and a more lengthened description on the accompanying page.



ONYCHOGALIA UNGUIFER, Gould

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Nail-tailed Kangaroo.

Macropus unguifer, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part viii. p. 93.—Ib. Mon. of Macropodidæ, pl. .—Gray, List of Spec. of Mamm. in Coll. Brit. Mus., p. 88.—Waterh. Nat. Hist. of Mamm., vol. i. p. 75.

THIS very elegant little Kangaroo, of which I have only seen a single example, was liberally placed in my hands, for the purpose of being described and figured, by Mr. Bynoe, of Her Majesty's Ship the Beagle, who had obtained it on the north-west coast during the present expedition of that vessel, whose captains and other officers, not only in this, but in her former voyage, have so largely extended our knowledge of the zoological productions of the little-known countries they have visited in the course of their explorations.

This animal peculiarly attracts our attention by the circumstance of its possessing a character not found in any other known member of its family, namely, a broad flattened nail much resembling that of the finger, situated at the extremity of the tail, but which is not ordinarily observable, from its being hidden in the tuft of long black hairs clothing the apical portion of that organ. It is true that a somewhat similar character exists in the *Onychogalea frænata*, but in that species it is merely rudimentary.

The foregoing remarks were published in my Monograph of the Kangaroos, and although nearly twenty years have since elapsed, no additional information has been obtained, nor has any other specimen than the original one in the British Museum been procured; it consequently still remains unique. It may be as well, however, to add Mr. Waterhouse's opinion respecting this animal, since it tends to establish a species dependent upon the skin of a single specimen; though no doubt could, I should suppose, be entertained by any one on this point, since the extreme elegance of the animal, both in shape and colour, and its lengthened tail terminated with an extraordinary-shaped nail, serve to distinguish it from every other known species.

"The muffle in *O. unguifer*," says Mr. Waterhouse, "is covered with hair, with the exception of a very narrow margin next the nostril-openings: the foremost of the three incisor teeth on either side of the upper jaw is distinctly the broadest, the other two are very nearly equal in width; the hindermost has a strong oblique external fold; these teeth are small compared with the incisors of most Kangaroos. A canine tooth is present, but it is very small. The tarsi are very long and slender; the ends of the nails of the double inner toe terminate $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches short of the end of the nail of the great central toe, and the tip of the nail of the outer toe is $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch short of the same point; the nails of the two larger toes are long, narrow, and much compressed above. The nails of the finger are rather short and broad."

Fur very short and moderately soft; general colour buffy yellow, extending on to the outer side of the legs and the base of the tail, and gradually passing into the all but pure white of the head, ears, legs and under surface; on each side of the body just before the knee a pale rusty patch; a brownish mark commences about the middle of the back, runs backward over the rump, and extends to about four inches along the upper surface of the tail; arms and tarsi cream-white; an indistinct yellowish-white mark, curving upwards, crosses the thigh at the base; middle portion of the tail brownish, the tip being clothed with a long black tuft, in the centre of which is a thinnish black nail half an inch in length and a quarter of an inch in breadth, convex above and concave beneath, considerably resembling the nail of the human finger.

	feet.	inches.
Length from the nose to the extremity of the tail	4	4
„ of tail	2	2
„ „ tarsus and toes, including the nail		$7\frac{1}{2}$
„ „ arm and hand, including the nails		5
„ „ face from the tip of the nose to the base of the ear . . .		$4\frac{1}{2}$
„ „ ear		$2\frac{1}{2}$

One of the accompanying Plates represents the head and fore part of the body, and two views of the extremity of the tail, all of the natural size; the other Plate, reduced figures of the entire animal.